



DATE: April 7, 1982 (3:00 PM - 5:10 PM)

TO: DWPC/FOS and Records Unit

FROM: Region 1 - D.J. Connor *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: WINNEBAGO COUNTY - Soterion, Inc. - Followup Complaint Investigation

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



352045

Interviewed: Gill R. Semans, Plant Manager and President

Accompanied By: Robert Wengrow, Pam LoPinto, DLPC/Rockford
Larry Prunty, DAPC/Rockford

Weather: Cloudy, 35-40°F

The following is a report of observations made and information obtained during a visit to Soterion, Inc., 800 Watts Avenue, Rockton. The visit was made to followup on complaints of cobalt contamination filed by local resident Pat Marx through an article in the March 26th edition of the Rockford Register Star.

A. Semans reviewed his plant process and explained that the liquid separated from the steel powder consists of 50% oil, 45% water and 5% "gunk". The oil is used or sold for fuel, the water is recycled, and the "gunk" is processed further into its constituent parts of 75% oil, 15% water and 10% particulate matter (diatomaceous earth). The final product of dried high speed steel alloy powder contains, among other materials, up to 3.2% chromium and 0.85% cobalt.

B. Semans stated that all water used in the process is recycled. He claimed only domestic wastewater is discharged to the septic system. He said that he did not respond to the DWPC letter of 9/17/81 or other Agency letters because he was afraid that any response would be equal to admitting that he handled hazardous waste which he considers untrue. The deficiencies addressed in that letter have been resolved if all water is recycled and oily runoff remains under control. In addition, Semans indicated that Soterion was now within the Rockton city limits. A new subdivision was being put in nearby and a sanitary sewer would be constructed to tie it and Soterion into the City system.

C. The blacktopped areas around the plant were relatively clean and free of oil. Semans explained that more careful material transfer and periodic streetsweeping have kept the area clean. However, pools of spilled oil were evident inside building #1.

D. Soterion has two water supplies. One well is 50 feet deep and the other is 160 feet deep. Semans indicated he only uses the 160 foot deep well for fear of bacterial contamination from area septic systems.

RECEIVED
Field Operations Section

JUL 19 1982

Environmental Protection Agency
State of Illinois